

WABASH RIVER HERITAGE CORRIDOR COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes – July 13 2005
ART'S, COMMERCE AND VISITOR'S CENTER
211 W. Water Street
Bluffton, Indiana

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| Voting Members Present: Adams County – Steve Krull Allen County – Paul McAfee Carroll County – Cass County – Janet Fawley (alternate) DNR – Steve Morris Huntington County – Mike Mettler Miami County – Ken Einselen Parke County – Sullivan County – John Gettinger Tippecanoe County – Norman (Lucky) Neiburger Vigo County – Keith Ruble (alternate) Wabash County – Ernest Passwater Warren County – Louise Jewell Well County – Keith Huffman | Voting Members Absent w/o Proxy: Carroll County Fountain County Gibson County Jay County Knox County Parke County Posey County Vermillion County |
| Non-Voting Members Present: Brian Blackford – Indiana Tourism | Non-Voting Members Not Present IDEM INDOT DNR-DHPA |
| Commission and DNR Staff Present: Ron James – WRHCC Executive Director Karen Hanes – DNR Outdoor Recreation | Guests: Susan Ruble Randy Plummer – President, Wells County Board of Commissioners Ted Ellis – Mayor of Bluffton |

CALL TO ORDER

John Gettinger called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m. John asked everyone to introduce themselves and the county they represent.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF THE MAY 11TH MEETING MINUTES

John Gettinger asked for approval of the May 11th meeting minutes. Steve Morris of DNR requested a revision be done to reflect that a proxy was received from Mike Mettler. Minutes were approved with the change.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

John Gettinger reported that he and Ron James recently went to the River Rally held in Keystone, Colorado. John stated that a lot of the things the commission would like to accomplish has to be done through State Legislation. Make sure you mention the river if you have the opportunity to meet your legislators. John reported he has been appointed to the Sycamore Trails RC&D. The Banks of the Wabash group is moving ahead with organizational changes. John stated both he and Ron are on the board of the directors. Arrangements have been made to meet with the Wabash Valley Association.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

A report from Ron James was included with the meeting agenda. Ron discussed attending the River Rally in Keystone, Colorado with John Gettinger. Ron also reported that he executed a purchase order direction from Water Trail Committee and took delivery of Water Trail signs from Hall Signs. Ron is working with PEN Products for an estimate of printing Water Trail Maps. Also, ordered a 3rd edition print of the commission's corridor brochure. Ron and John also attended the June 15th meeting of Banks of the Wabash Directors meeting and reported that the Banks of the Wabash Board approved a new dues structure to enable the production of a new membership brochure for the chapter organization. Work on the 2005/2006 newsletter is still in progress.

Keith Huffman ask to introduce Randy Plummer, President of the County Commissioners of Wells County and a member of the Upper Wabash River Basin Commission. Mr. Plummer stated the Upper Wabash applied for a watershed grant and it was approved. He also discussed some of the activities they were involved in.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance Steve Morris of DNR distributed a financial report to the commission members with a summary of the budget. Steve pointed out that this is not the final report, but a draft of the final financial report. Steve suggested the commission work on trying to have projects ready to go and not put it off until the end of the year.

Steve presented a proposed budget for the 2005-2006 year. Keith Huffman asked if adjustments could be made to the budget if needed. Steve indicated it could. Keith Huffman made a motion to approve the budget. Lucky Neiburger seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Legislative Study Committee No action, no report

Water Trail: Mike Mettler reported water trail signs have been purchased. The small signs will be placed at launch sites. The larger signs will be placed on bridges etc. The map project is progressing. A prototype of the map brochure was made available for the commission to review. Map containers have been purchased to attach to the new sign post for the maps once they have been printed. These maps will also be available as a html file.

River Road/Heritage Community signage project: Nothing to report this time.

Wabash Video: Nature Conservancy has dedicated \$12,000 towards the video. We were looking at a maximum budget around \$36,000 to \$45,000 for the Wabash video. With the \$5,000 from a donation from Hoosier Energy., WFYI began another step of production. More footage will be collected for the project. They are also researching for story line productions.

Education: Discover the River Project for 4-H has signed up 28 kids from Sullivan County for the program. Also being used in Sullivan and Vermillion Counties.

Newsletter: Ron James reported the *L'Esprit de Ouabache* newsletter has not been completed. He is still trying to collect articles to put into the newsletter regarding festivals, etc.

Interpretive Brochure: "Corridor" Brochure. We are waiting on the printed brochure to be delivered from PEN Products.

OLD BUSINESS

Status of Banks of the Wabash Brochure and new dues structure: Ron James reported that the dues structure is new but it varies only slightly from the old. Susan Ulrich is handling development of the brochure, which has not been started yet.

Wabash River Heritage Paddlefest: They are expecting 1,000 people for this event on August 6th at New Harmony.

De-Trash the Wabash: Ron James reported this event was very successful in Lafayette. About 75 volunteers helped pick up trash. They received a lot of help from county and city parks in Tippecanoe County. Local tire companies came and disposed of old tires as part of their donation and food was donated by local restaurants. Successful river clean-up efforts were also reported for Vigo County and Bluffton. Safety equipment is now available for county De-trash events from the Banks of the Wabash organization.

National River Rally, Keystone, CO: (See president's report and executive director's report)

Enjoy Indiana Listing Contract 2006: Ron James reported listing the corridor brochure is a 2 year contract for \$4,200 per year and \$8,400 commitment. Ron felt the fee was more than the commission would be willing to pay. To put a listing for the commission in the regional sections of the Enjoy Indiana, the commission would have to purchase listings in 4 separate regions to have a listing in each of the regions that cover our corridor. This would cost \$280 per listing, 2 year commitment, \$560 per area, \$2,040 total. These are the options. No decision needs to be made for another year.

Membership purchases in NPO's in corridor: Ron reported he was not able to complete organizational membership purchases in the last fiscal year. He is currently making a list and trying to get costs for the next fiscal year.

NEW BUSINESS

Resource Guide update: announcing 1st call for changes

Wabash River Symposium: Will be held October 6 & 7 at St. Mary of Woods in Terre Haute, Indiana and Ron James will be one of the speakers. Ron will be speaking about the politics of the Wabash River.

Wabash River Heritage Corridor Fund: Lucky Neiburger inquired whether a committee is needed to start looking getting corridor project funds from the State Budget Committee. This would help us be pro-active. The Legislative Committee would be able to handle this function, however it needs to be reappointed.

Bluffton Request: Keith Huffman stated Bluffton received a Wabash River Heritage Corridor Grant that that has been extended through September 1, 2007. The grant is to be used for a new park on the north side of the year. Keith Huffman made a motion to recommend DNR let Bluffton use \$10,000 of these funds for a portion of the recently completed amphitheater project at Kehoe Park. Lucky Neiburger seconded the motion. Motion carried.

WRP Cost Sharing: Keith Ruble would like the commission to pursue whatever action is necessary to allow use of Wabash River Heritage Corridor Funds to cost share with federal wetland restoration programs in order to acquire land by paying more than the actual appraised value. This may also be something that the Legislative Committee needs to address.

WFYI Agreement: Lucky Neiburger asked if Mercedes Brugh has a copy of an agreement with WFYI for the video project. Lucky made a motion requesting Ron James get in touch with Mercedes regarding the agreement details and report back at the next meeting. Keith Huffman seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Sullivan County request: Ron James stated that a solicitation was sent to the commission for sponsorship of the 8th Grade Wabash River Raft trip in Sullivan County. Sponsorship should run about \$200. Keith Huffman moved to approve sponsorship of this event. Mike Mettler seconded. Motion carried.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

John Gettinger asked if the commissioner would be interested in setting up a retreat for 2 days in March. The majority of the commission would prefer to attend a centrally located meeting on Tuesday and Wednesday rather than a Friday and Saturday.

Brian Blackford from Indiana Office of Tourism announced that a series of media workshops will be held. Call 317-232-8881 for locations. The workshop will help with how to deal with media, how to do press releases, etc. Workshops on Agriculture Tourism will also be held throughout the state.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:25 p.m.

The next meeting will be held September 14, 2005 in Terre Haute, Indiana.